

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6468
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 KIGALI 1277

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS AID/W AND PC/W

NAIROBI FOR REDSO/EA

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, RW, US
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA DISCUSSES AID AND PEACE CORPS

SUMMARY: I DEBATED AID AND PEACE CORPS PROBLEMS WITH
PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA AUGUST 1 FOR OVER AN HOUR, IN HOPE
OF THRASHING OUT ISSUES ON TWO KEY PROJECTS: A CONTRIBUTION
TO AN AGRICULTURAL TRAINING SCHOOL FOR GIRLS AND A
PCV FISH CULTURE PROGRAM. I FOUND HABYARIMANA MORE
DISTRESSED THAN EVERY BEFORE OVER "PARSIMONIOUS" WESTERN
ASSISTANCE EFFORTS -- PARTICULARLY THAT OF US -- AND
ESPECIALLY NEGATIVE ABOUT ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS. SHOWING
HIM AID'S FY-80 ABS FOR RWANDA, I TRIED HARD TO MAKE HIM
SEE THAT PIPELINE WAS FILLING, AND I MADE A SPECIAL
PITCH ON BEHALF OF PEACE CORPS AND NON-MONETARY
CONTRIBUTION PCV'S COULD MAKE. HABYARIMANA ASKED THAT WE
TRY TO APPRECIATE HIS OWN EMBARRASSMENT AT HAVING TO DEFEND
OUR "MINISCULE" PROJECT PROPOSALS BEFORE COUNCIL OF
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MINISTERS AND RWANDAN PUBLIC, BUT HE AGREED TO FACILITATE
MATTERS BY ENDORSING GIRLS' TRAINING SCHOOL PROJECT.
PEACE CORPS PROGRAM CAUSED HIM GREATER PROBLEMS, HOWEVER:
RWANDA NEEDED TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY, NOT VOLUNTEERS, HE
INSISTED. IN THE END, HE AGREED TO A COMPROMISE ON FISH
CULTURE TOO; BUT EXCHANGE LEFT ME DEEPLY TROUBLED AT HOW
TO CORRECT HIS MISCONCEPTIONS OF PC ROLE AND PROVE TO

HIM VOLUNTEERS' POTENTIALLY TREMENDOUS VALUE HERE. END SUMMARY.

1. MY OFT-DELAYED MEETING WITH PRES. HABYARIMANA TOOK PLACE AUGUST 1. HOUR-LONG SESSION WAS DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO AID AND PEACE CORPS MATTERS. PRESIDENT APOLOGIZED FOR HAVING PUT ME OFF FOR SO LONG, EXPLAINING HE HAD BEEN TAKEN UP WITH OAU SUMMIT AND "PROJECT WEEK" (ACTUALLY, A TWO-WEEK PERIOD EACH YEAR DURING WHICH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS AROUND THE COUNTRY ARE INAUGURATED). HE ADDED, AND I AGREED, IT WAS TOO BAD US ROLE IN RWANDAN DEVELOPMENT HAD NOT BEEN MORE PRONOUNCED DURING "PROJECT WEEK." I SAID IT WAS FOR JUST THIS REASON I THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT THAT WE TALK.

2. HABYARIMANA SAID HE CONTINUED TO HAVE IMPRESSION THAT US REALLY WASN'T INTERESTED IN RWANDA AND ITS DEVELOPMENT, HOWEVER MUCH ATTENTION IT MIGHT BE PAYING TO AFRICA IN GENERAL THESE DAYS. I INSISTED THIS WAS NOT RPT NOT TRUE, AND I SHOWED HIM A COPY OF AID'S FY-80 BUDGET SUBMISSION FOR RWANDA SHOWING PROPOSED STEADY INCREASE FROM PRESENT \$2.8 MILLION LEVEL TO AS MUCH AS \$10-12 MILLION BY FY-84. I ALSO ACCOUNTED SUCCESSION OF AID STUDY TEAMS WHICH HAVE LATELY VISITED RWANDA TO HELP US FLESH OUT THAT PROGRAM.

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3. PRESIDENT SEEMED PERPLEXED. ON ONE HAND, HE WAS GRATIFIED AT PROJECTS PROPOSED IN ABS, ALTHOUGH HE FOUND THEM MODEST COMPARED TO EFFORTS OF OTHER DONORS IN RWANDA, NOTABLY BELGIUM. ON THE OTHER, HE WAS DISTURBED THAT ABS PROJECTIONS SEEMED UNRELATED TO RWANDA'S REAL NEEDS: "YOU HAVE NOT RESPONDED TO OUR PLEAS FOR A METHANE FERTILIZER PLANT, A MODERN GRAIN SILO, AN ALL-WEATHER HIGHWAY FROM BUTARE TO CYWNGUGU." HE REFERRED WITH SPECIAL UNHAPPINESS TO PROPOSED FISH CULTURE PROJECT WITH (FIRST PHASE) PRICE TAG OF ONLY \$150,000. "WHEN I AM ASKED TO DESCRIBE RELATIONS WITH US TO RWANDANS AND MUST REFER TO PROJECTS SUCH AS THIS ONE, RWANDANS LAUGH. US-RWANDAN RELATIONS SHOULD NOT BE A LAUGHING MATTER."

4. I SOUGHT TO PERSUADE PRESIDENT THAT US DESIRE TO PLAY MORE GENEROUS ROLE IN RWANDAN DEVELOPMENT (ALBEIT NOT TO COMPETE WITH BELGIANS) WAS SINCERE. OUR PROBLEM WAS TO DOVETAIL OUR ASSISTANCE PROCEDURES WITH THOSE OF RWANDA. USAID GENERALLY INSISTED ON STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH, BEGINNING EXPERIMENTALLY AND GROWING IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS;

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INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A W SECTION 2 OF 3 KIGALI 1277
LIMDIS

WHEREAS GOR PREFERRED EUROPEAN-STYLE LONGER-TERM "POLITICAL
COMMITMENT OF LARGER CHUNK OF FUNDS, WITH PROJECTS
TO BE FLESHED OUT LATEGYYL TECHNICIANS. WE WERE SIMPLY
UNABLE TO OFFER THIS TYPE OF COMMITMENT, THOUGH CUMULATIVE
EFFECT OF OUR EFFORTS MIGHT BE COMPARABLE IN DOLLAR VALUE
AND MORE MEANINGFUL IN TRUE DEVELOPMENT TERMS. I RECOG-
NIZED OUR SYSTEM WAS MADDENING TO WORK WITH, BUT I DID
NOT EXPECT THAT WE IN KIGALI HAD MUCH CHANCE OF CHANGING
IT. THEREFORE, IF RWANDA TRULY WANTED TO ENGAGE USG IN
ITS DEVELOPMENT EFFORT, SENSIBLE THING WOULD BE TO ADJUST
ITS OWN PROCEDURES TO FIT OURS.

5. REFERRING TO FISH CULTURE PROPOSAL SPECIFICALLY, I
REMINDED PRESIDENT THAT THIS WAS ESSENTIALLY A PEACE CORPS
VOLUNTEER PROJECT (THE FIRST GENUINE OUT-AMONGST-THE
PEOPLE PROJECT IN RWANDA) RATHER THAN A CAPITAL-
INTENSIVE AID PROJECT. REAL DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION WAS
TO BE PROVIDED BY PCV'S WHO WOULD WORK CLOSELY WITH
RWANDANS IN COUNTRYSIDE TO BUILD FISH TANKS, STOCK THEM,
GROW FEED, AND HARVEST FISH. AID'S \$150,0000 FIRST-YEAR
CONTRIBUTION WAS MERELY INTENDED TO GET VOLUNTEERS UNDER-
WAY AND PROVIDE MOST ESSENTIAL TOOLS AND HOUSING. PRESIDENT
PROTESTED, SAYING WHAT OVER-POPULATED RWANDA NEEDED

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WAS NOT VOLUNTEER LABOR BUT DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL: TOOLS

AND TECHNOLOGY. RWANDANS HAD BEEN GROWING THEIR OWN FOOD AND FISH FOR CENTURIES AND HAD NO NEED FOR FOREIGNERS TO COME ALONG AND "ENCOURAGE" THEM. INSTEAD, THEY NEEDED FERTILIZER, IMPROVED SEEDS, MACHINERY, SILOS, AND TRUE "EXPERTS" WHO COULD PLAN AND DIRECT PROJECTS WHICH RWANDANS IN TURN WERE PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF CARRYING OUT.

6. WE DEBATED POTENTIAL PEACE CORPS ROLE AT GREAT LENGTH, AND I CITED EVERY ARGUMENT AND PC SUCCESS STORY I COULD THINK OF. HABYARIMANA REMAINED SKEPTICAL PCV'S COULD

WORK EFFECTIVELY SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH RWANDAN PEASANTS. WHEN I STRESSED STIMULUS AND CATALYST WHICH PCV COULD PROVIDE, HE REPLIED THESE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE PROVIDED BY LOCAL OFFICIALS -- AND IF THEY WEREN'T, OFFICIALS WEREN'T DOING THEIR JOBS AND NEEDED TO BE FIRED. HAB-

YARIMANA WAS NEVERTHELESS WILLING TO GIVE FISH CULTURE PROJECT A LIMITED TRY, BUT CUTTING PHASE I PCV COMPONENT FROM 12 TO "4 OR 5," BUT HE URGED WE CONSIDER REPLACING VOLUNTEERS WITH EXPERTS WHO COULD DESIGN AND DIRECT A FULL-SCALE FISH-GROWING PROJECT IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS.

7. THE OTHER BURNING AID QUESTION ON MY AGENDA WAS RECENT GOR DECISION NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH IMPROVEMENT OF TWO AGRICULTURAL TRAINING SCHOOLS, ONE FOR GIRLS AT NYAGAHANGA AND THE OTHER FOR BOYS AT KIBUYE. DESPITE URGENT REQUESTS FROM TECHNICAL MINISTRIES OVER PAST 18 MONTHS, FONMIN HAD BALKED (A) BECAUSE IT DOUBTED UTILITY OF TRAINING WOMEN EXTENSION AGENTS AND (B) BECAUSE IT STILL HOPED TO GET SWISS AID FOR KIBUYE SCHOOL. I STATED FACTS OF LIFE WITH RESPECT TO NYAGAHANGA--THERE WAS NO CONFIDENTIAL

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WAY I WAS GOING TO TELL AID/W WE WERE NO LONGER INTERESTED IN WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT, ESPECIALLY GIVEN KEY ROLE PLAYED BY RWANDAN WOMEN IN OUR LOCAL AREA OF FOOD GROWING. PRESIDENT HAD NO TROUBLE SEIZING THIS BUT EXPLAINED THAT GOR WAS NOW HOPING TO BUILD A MAJOR AGRO-LIVESTOCK SCHOOL AT YET A THIRD SITE VERY CLOSE TO NYAGAHANGA. HE SUGGESTED WE UTILIZE FUNDS TO HAVE GONE INTO KIBUYE BOYS SCHOOL TO HELP BUILD AGRO-LIVESTOCK SCHOOL FOR BOYS, LINKED TO NYAGAHANGA GIRLS SCHOOL DOWN THE ROAD. I SAID I LIKED THE IDEA, IF WE COULD BE ASSURED THERE WOULD BE NO DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GIRLS SCHOOL. HE TOLD AIDES TO SCHEDULE TECHNICAL MEETING LATER THIS WEEK TO WORK OUT DETAILS AND GET PROJECT MOVING QUICKLY.

8. FINALLY, PRESIDENT RETURNED TO MOST RECENT GOR REQUEST, THAT ASKING USAID TO BUILD A LARGE FOOD GRAIN

SILO TO STORE CARRY-OVER FROM PLENTIFUL YEARS TO LEAN
ONES. ME PROTESTED REPORT THAT WE HAD ALREADY DISMISSED
SILO PROPOSAL AS A "PRESTIGE" PROJECT OF SORT AID/W
AND CONGRESS WOULD NOT APPROVE. TO THE CONTRARY, HE SAID,
PROJECT WAS AIMED AT ENSURING THAT ALL RWANDANS
HAD ENOUGH TO EAT WITHOUT RESORTING TO FOREIGN DOLE --
HARDLY A "PRESTIGE" PURPOSE. I REPLIED THAT AID EXPERTS
(NOW IN KIGALI TO STUDY CROP STORAGE POSSIBILITIES)

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 KIGALI 1277
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DISSENTED ON TECHNICAL GROUNDS, SAYING NATIONAL NETWORK
OF SMALLER SILOS ORGANIZED AROUND LOCAL COOPERATIVES
WOULD BETTER MERVE RWANDA'S NEEDS THAN A SINGLE, CENTRAL
FACILITY. I ADDED THAT MEETINGS NOW IN PROGRESS AT TECH-
NICAL LEVEL WOULD DISCUSS THESE DIFFERENCES, WITH A VIEW
TOWARD EVENTUAL USAID COUNTER-PROPOSALS. HABYARIMANA
EXPRESSED KEEN INTEREST IN SEEING REPORTS PREPARED BY AID
EXPERTS ON THIS SUBJECT. AND WE PROMISED TO PROVIDE

9. COMMENT: LONG-AWAITED SESSION TURNED OUT TO BE
PAINFUL FOR BOTH SIDES. GREATLY ENRAPTURED OF CHINESE
AND KOREAN AID OFFERINGS, HMABYARIMANA WAS CLEARLY DIS-
PLEASED THAT RWANDA'S LONG-TIME WESTERN FRIENDS WERE NOT
AS FORTHCOMING. HE WAS NOT MUCH PERSUADED BY ABS PRO-
JECTIONS OF LERGESSE, AFTER 22 MONTHS OF EXPERT STUDIES
WHICH HAVE STILL RESULTED IN NO SIGNED US COMMITMENT
TO A MAJOR NEW PROJECT "WORTHY" OF US. THEY ARE VERY
IMPATIENT PEOPLE, THESE RWANDANS, AND OUR STUDIES ARE
ADMITTEDLY SLOW IN BEARING FRUIT.

10. RWANDANS THEMSELVES, OF COURSE, HAVE NOT HELPED

TO SPEED THINGS 70 -- AS I TRIED TO IMPRESS UPON PRESIDENT. HE DID NOT IGNORE THIS ARGUMENT AND PRESSED ME TO TELL HIM CONFIDENTIALLY WHERE I THOUGHT THE HOLD-KP
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WAS. FRANKLY, I WAS CHAGRINED AT NOT BEING ABLE TO EXPLOIT THIS OPENING VERY EFFECTIVELY, AS THERE SEEMS TO BE NO CLEAR PATTERN IN THE DELAYS WE EXPERIENCE: SOMETIMES GOR STALLS BECAUSE PROJECTS STRIKE THEM AS TOO TRIVIAL; OTHER TIMES THEY CHANGE THEIR MINDS AT ELEVENTH HOUR OR DISAGREE AMONG THEMSELVES. MOST OFTEN, THEIR UNDERDEVELOPED BUREAUCRACY SIMPLY SEEMS UNABLE TO HANDLE OUR TECHNICALLY DETAILED PROPOUALS.

11. NEVERTHELESS, WE REGISTERED SOME PROGRESS ON USAID SIDE, AND WE'LL KEEP SLOGGING. I AM MUCH MORE CONCERNED AT WHERE WE'RE HEADED WITH PEACE CORPS. LIKE SO MANY OTHER RWANDANS, PRESIDENT STILL HAS NO REAL UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT PC IS ABOUT, NOR APPRECIATION OF THE COIDRCBUTION SKILLED VOLUNTEERS CAN MAKE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. RWANDANS SEEM HOPELESSLY CONVINCED THAT PCV'S ARE ONLY CUT-RATE "EXPERTS" WHO AT BEST CAN ONLY PROVIDE TECHNICAL SKILLS TO FILL GAPS IN GOR BEAUCRACY. IT IS DEMEANING TO HAVE TO BEG FOR PCV REQUESTS, EITHER BY TWISTING PRESIDENT'S ARM PERSONALLY OR BY BUYING THEIR ENTREE WITH AID FUNDS. AND UNTIL A REAL PC PROJECT HAS HAD A CHANCE TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT VOLUNTEERS CAN DO, I SEE LITTLE HOPE OF ALTERING PRESENT PERCEPTIONS. YET THERE IS A LIMIT HOW LONG WE CAN EXPECT PC TO MAINTAIN A FULL IN-COUNTRY OPERATION WITH ONLY A HANDFUL OF PCV'S WORKING AS DESK JOCKEYS.

12. I AM NOT YET READY, HOWEVER, TO CONCEDE ERROR IN ARGUING FOR A BIGGER PC ROLE IN RWANDA. PRESIDENT IS MISTAKEN IN BELIEVING THAT DEVELOPMENT PLANS HATCHED BY "EXPERTS" IN KIGALI WILL SOMEHOW REMAKE COUNTRYSIDE. I STILL BELIEVE PCV'S WORKING "OUT THERE" SHOULD-TO-SHOULDER WITH RWANDANS CAN HELP BRING THOSE FINE PLANS
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TO FUITION. PERHAPS PRESIDENT CAN STILL BE BROUGHT AROUND. PERHAPS I AM SIMPLY WRONG. BUT EVEN A CUT-BACK, PHASE I FISH CULTURE PROGRAM AFFORDS US A CHANCE TO PROVE OUR CASE. I HOPE PC/W WILL SHARE MY BELIEF THAT WE MUST KEEP ON TRUCKIN'.
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